






Land and Water Quality Division
Beach and Bay Water Quality Status Report

For the **current status** on coastal water quality in San Diego County,
call **(619) 338-2073**.

DEFINITIONS:

 <p>Permanent metal sign</p>	<p>GENERAL ADVISORY FOR ALL COASTAL WATERS DUE TO RAINFALL:</p> <p>A General Advisory is issued after 0.2" or more rain to alert the public of ocean and bay water contamination by urban runoff. Bacterial levels can increase significantly in ocean and bay waters, especially near all storm drain, river, and lagoon outlets, during and after rainstorms. The Department of Environmental Health advises beach users to avoid contact with ocean and bay waters for a period of 3 days, or 72 hours, after rainfall ends. While many coastal outlets (storm drains, rivers, and lagoons) within San Diego County are permanently posted with white metal warning signs, <u>additional temporary warning signs are not posted for General Advisories.</u></p>
 <p>Temporary cardboard signs</p>	<p>CLOSURES:</p> <p>A water contact Closure is issued anytime a reported sewage spill impacts or may impact ocean or bay recreational waters. Sewage contaminated water may contain human pathogens that can cause illnesses. The Department of Environmental Health advises beach users to avoid contact with ocean and bay waters in the closure area and where closure signs are posted.</p> <p>< Temporary cardboard signs</p>
 <p>Temporary cardboard signs</p>	<p>ADVISORIES / WARNINGS:</p> <p>A water contact Advisory/ Warning is issued when monitoring reveals ocean or bay water quality does not meet State standards due to high bacterial levels, or during the excavation of a coastal outlet (river or lagoon) when potentially contaminated water is released into the ocean. Beach water quality monitoring uses bacterial indicators to test for possible fecal contamination. The bacterial indicators are not specific to humans, and may be from other sources including wildlife, pets, soils, and rotting vegetation like kelp. Ocean or bay waters with elevated bacterial levels may contain human pathogens that can cause illnesses. The Department of Environmental Health advises beach users to avoid contact with ocean and bay waters where advisory/ warning signs are posted. Signs are usually posted 50 yards (150 feet) either side of a sampling location where water quality does not meet State standards.</p>

BEACHES WITH URBAN RUNOFF FLOWS DURING DRY WEATHER:

As a precaution, avoid contact with runoff and recreational waters within at least 75 feet from where runoff enters ocean or bay waters during dry weather.

TO REPORT ILLEGAL DISCHARGES TO STORM DRAINS: call **(888) 846-0800**

Recreational Water Monitoring Program

Where is it safe to swim? Southern California beaches are very clean most of the time as indicated by water quality monitoring. Storm water runoff can make beaches unsuitable for swimming or surfing for at least 72 hours after a rainstorm. Beaches impacted by urban runoff from storm drains, streams and rivers should be avoided. Also, signs are posted warning not to swim at locations where water does not meet standards or sewage contamination has occurred.

What do we test for? Total Coliform, Fecal Coliform and Enterococcus Bacteria.

What are they? Indicators of possible disease producing bacteria/viruses/protozoa (also known as pathogens)

Where do they come from?

Environment-soils, decaying vegetation
Storm water/ urban runoff - sources vary

Animal wastes-birds, dogs, cats, seals
Humans-sewage, kids with diapers, shedding from body

What are the standards?

Single Sample standards
Total Coliforms - 10,000 organisms per 100 ml. sample
Fecal Coliforms - 400 organisms per 100-ml. sample
Enterococci - 104 organisms per 100 ml. sample
Fecal: Total ratio -if total coliforms >1,000 & ratio > 0.1

30-day log mean standards
(Based on 5 weekly samples)
Total Coliforms - 1,000 organisms per 100 ml. sample
Fecal Coliforms - 200 organisms per 100-ml. sample
Enterococci - 35 organisms per 100-ml. sample

What pathogens may be found in swimming waters contaminated with sewage and possibly in runoff?

Pathogenic Agent	Disease	Pathogenic Agent	Disease
Bacteria		Viruses	
<i>E. Coli</i>	Gastroenteritis	Rotavirus	Gastroenteritis
<i>Salmonella typhi</i>	Typhoid fever	Norwalk virus	Gastroenteritis
Other Salmonella Species	Various enteric fevers (also called paratyphoid), gastroenteritis, septicemia (generalized infections in the bloodstream)	Coxsackie virus (some strains)	Various including sever respiratory disease, fever, rashes, paralysis, meningitis
<i>Shigella dysenteriae</i> and other species	Bacterial dysentery	Adenovirus	Respiratory and gastrointestinal infections
<i>Vibrio cholera</i>	Cholera	Echovirus	Various, similar to coxsackie virus (evidence only in experimental animals)
Protozoa (Intestinal Parasites)		Polio Virus	Poliomyelitis
<i>Cryptosporidium</i>	Diarrhea- Crytosporidiosis	Hepatitis A	Infectious hepatitis (liver malfunction), also may affect kidneys and spleen
<i>Giardia lamblia</i>	Diarrhea- Giardiasis		

What happens to the bacteria/viruses/protozoa in swimming waters?

Die off due to sun, salt water or age. Dilution. Predation by other organisms

What is the recent water quality trend at each location based upon the monitoring data?

Log onto the Heal The Bay web page www.healthebay.org Select the *Beach Report Card*.

What beaches are currently posted?

Call the San Diego County Beach and Bay Status Report for an update of current posted beaches at (619) 338-2073, OR Log onto or www.beaches911.org
For more information, go to www.sdcountry.ca.gov/deh/water/beach_bay.html